

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 INT-08 SCEM-02

SCI-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AF-10 NEA-10 DRC-01 /185 W

----- 048034

R 061820Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9065

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

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E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: ENRG, BE

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENTS IN BELGIUM

REF: BRUSSELS 6272

1. GOB ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 5 NUMBER OF MEASURES INTENDED TO CONSERVE PETROLEUM STOCKS IN COMING MONTHS: SPEED LIMITS ON ROADS, TEMPERATURE LIMITS IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, SUNDAY DRIVING BAN (EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 18 BARRING PRIOR IMPROVEMENT IN SITUATION), DISTRIBUTION PROCEDURE FOR STOCKS HELD BY MAJOR COMPANIES. GOVERNMENT NOTICE STRONGLY IMPLIES THESE MEASURES MAY BE FOLLOWED BY MORE STRINGENT RESTRICTIONS LATER.

2. MINECONAFFAIRS CLAES ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT GOB SUPPORTS EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY WIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM REGARDING IMPORTS/EXPORTS OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS.

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GOB ALSO IS "NOT OPPOSED" TO IDEA THAT EC LIMIT EXPORTS TO "THIRD

COUNTRIES". FINALLY, GOB WOULD SUPPORT EC REGULATION OF COMMUNITY-WIDE PRICES BY SETTING MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PRICES. IF SUCH AN EC CONTROL SYSTEM PROVES IMPOSSIBLE, GOB BELIEVES INDIVIDUAL EC COUNTRIES SHOULD BE PERMITTED INDIVIDUALLY TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES, WITHOUT RECOURSE TO EUROPEAN COMMISSION.

3. MINFORAFFAIRS OFFICIAL CALLED EMBOFF MORNING NOVEMBER 6 TO DENY EMPHATICALLY LOCAL NEWSPAPER REPORTS THAT GOB WAS PURSUING UNILATERAL CONTACTS WITH ARB OIL PRODUCERS (PARA 2 REFTEL) IN EFFORT OBTAIN MORE FAVORABLE TREATMENT FOR BELGIUM.

4. AT LUNCHEON NOVEMBER 6 HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR, LOCAL HEADS OF TWO OIL COMPANIES (SMITS OF CHEVRON EUROPE AND MEEUS OF PETROFINA) EXPRESSED PESSIMISM OVER IMMEDIATE PETROLEUM SUPPLY SITUATION. THEY CRITICIZED WHAT THEY CHARACTERIZED AS INADEQUATE CONSERVATION MEASURES BY EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND DECRIED FAILURE OF ALL CONSUMING COUNTRIES' GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE POLICY GUIDANCE TO OIL COMPANIES. SMITS SAID THAT DUTCH GOVERNMENT HAD WARNED OIL COMPANIES NOT REDUCE SHIPMENTS TO NETHERLANDS BY AMOUNT GREATER THAN REDUCTIONS IN SUPPLIES TO OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES OR GON WOULD TAKE ACTION "AGAINST THOSE RESPONSIBLE".
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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